

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendment of Part 97 of the Commission's)	
Amateur Radio Service Rules to Eliminate)	RM - 10786
Morse Code Proficiency Testing Requirements)	
For All Classes of Amateur Licenses)	
)	
To: The Commission)	

Comments Of Salvinu C. Vella KB1GYI

- There was a time when Morse code proficiency was meaningful. It saved lives and was an important part of Amateur Communications. Times have changed. Amateur methods have changes as well. Today there are quite a number of amateur digital media modes. Morse code is but one. Just because it was the first does not mean it is any better than the others or that it is sacred. All digital media should have their place and none should be imposed as a usage requirement. Indeed if one digital media should be imposed it should be one that is easiest for all to use. The world governing body, the IARU, has seen the true place of Morse code in this day and age and has essentially removed the requirement. There is no necessary purpose for proficiency in Morse code for emergency purposes. Today there are many other digital low bandwidth modes that can get thru in an emergency.
- Since the Commission is no longer bound by a requirement in the ITU Radio Regulations it can and should act promptly to remove this Morse Code proficiency restrictive requirement.
- Other administrations have already removed this Morse Code requirement. The list of administrations grows longer each day. These world bodies are essentially saying that Morse code is not required for emergency purposes.
- With the reduction of this unnecessary requirement the Amateur ranks will grow. Along with this growth will be the number of amateurs who will be permitted to assist in emergencies.

- With more amateurs joining the ranks of Radio Amateurs there will be a larger pool of minds and ideas and these will bring more innovations. The British have seen an increase in their radio Amateur ranks since they reduced their Morse Code requirements at the beginning of this year. And that was before they remove the requirement altogether. The Us can expect to see more individuals joining the ranks of radio amateurs.
- Unnecessary restrictions have always crushed innovation and been a means of keeping out new amateurs. I do not mean to refer to the radio proficiency tests that are now required as unnecessary. These are indeed necessary. I am only referring to the Morse code proficiency test.
- The Commission has the authority to amend its Part 97 rules to eliminate Morse proficiency requirements by expedited order, without formal notice and public input.
 - The Commission considered the issue of continued Morse proficiency requirements in WT Docket Number 98-143 where there was extensive input from the public and concerned parties, and to this date the only change from that consideration is that the only stated reason for retaining any Morse proficiency test has been removed.
 - By granting NCI's Petition, a burden on applicants for amateur radio licenses would be removed, no additional requirement would be imposed, and therefore no party or other person would be prejudiced by such Commission action.
- This course would be a wise, correct, and prudent decision on the Commission's part, because:
 - as pointed out, it is clearly within the Commission's authority;
 - it would save considerable drain on the Commission's limited and valuable resources in dealing with a matter that the Commission has already considered extensively;
 - and, it would remove an unnecessary, restrictive burden, *that the Commission has already determined does not comport with the purpose of the Amateur Radio Service and serves no regulatory purpose.*
- The Commission should refrain from combining NCI's request for the prompt elimination of Morse test requirements from its rules with other substantially unrelated issues such as, but not limited to, band segmentation, changes in the number of license classes, sweeping changes in operator privileges by license class, etc., because that would result in unnecessary, protracted delay in resolving this important and clear-cut issue.
- In summary, for all of the reasons outlined and referenced herein, the Commission should enact the following changes to its rules in the most expeditious manner possible:
 - Eliminate the "Element 1" Morse test totally from the Commission's rules for all license classes.
 - Since the only testing distinction between the Technician class and the (grandfathered) Technician Plus class is the "Element 1" Morse Test, modify, as a consequential and logical change, the privileges afforded to Technician class licensees to be equivalent to those currently afforded to Technician Plus licensees and "Technician with Morse credit" licensees.

Respectfully submitted,

Salvinu C. Vella - KB1GYI

30 Ledgewood Drive

Gales Ferry, Ct 06335